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2 August 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

C U R R E N T I N T E L L I G E N C E
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Communist China: Peking is making interim appointments to key military and propaganda posts affected by the recent leadership reshuffle.

On 1 August one of China's leading troop commanders, Yang Cheng-wu, was identified as "acting chief of staff." Another senior military figure, Hsiao Wang-tung, was mentioned in the Chinese press on 31 July with the title "acting Minister of Culture."

It is doubtful that these officials were merely filling in temporarily for those who have held those posts. Minister of Culture Lu Ting-yi was replaced as head of the party's propaganda department in early July, and almost certainly has been removed from all his posts. Lo Jui-ching, who was chief of staff and at the same time responsible for secret police affairs, has been out of public view since November 1965 and reportedly was dismissed this spring.

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USSR: Significant changes in the Soviet Government may be announced at the meeting of the Supreme Soviet (parliament) opening today.

There is evidence to point to some reorganization of government ministries and to personnel changes. Approval of the establishment of a Central Ministry for the Protection of Public Order is certain, and Foreign Minister Gromyko may be given the rank of deputy premier.

The most recent Moscow rumor is that Kosygin will "resign" for reasons of health. The Moscow correspondent of the Czech Communist Party newspaper, Rude Pravo, reported yesterday that a "stabilization" of the government is expected, rather than "a surprise." Kosygin's resignation would hardly be a routine "stabilization." The premier is 62, but he has been following a grueling schedule and there is no evidence of actual ill health.

Kosygin's departure from the top government job cannot be forecast on the strength of the available information. A plenum of the party central committee, which would have to put its stamp on any change of such significance, was held yesterday on "questions" connected with the Supreme Soviet session.

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*Nigeria: Army chief of staff Gowon stopped short of calling for northern secession in his statement taking over the government yesterday, but major uncertainties remain.

A Christian northerner who has suddenly become the top national spokesman for the resurgent Muslim-dominated North, Gowon flatly rejected the unitary government structure projected last May by General Ironsi, who is now deposed and [probably dead]. Contrary to his apparent earlier intention and the evident preference of extremist northern officers around him, however, he did not announce plans for northern separation.

Gowon indicated instead his intent to preside, at least for the present, over a nominal continuation of Ironsi's national military regime which would in reality be a new government. The new leadership would "review" the structural problem to see if the country's drift into "utter destruction" can be halted. He promised to honor all of Nigeria's international commitments. [In the past, Gowon has been well disposed toward the US.]

Gowon's decision not to announce for secession at this time has probably been influenced by key moderate leaders in the North whose objective has been to safeguard their region against southern encroachments in a continuing union. Some of these leaders now are reported to have given assurances through the chief justice, a southerner, that nothing would be done about secession at least for six weeks.

Gowon's prospects of getting such a tentative new regime off the ground do not at present appear bright even though northerners apparently responsive to his command currently control what remains of most if not all major army units. The Army has in fact virtually ceased to exist for now as a cohesive, effective organization as a result of the Hausa mutiny and the decimation of the important Ibo element in its

already weak command structure. There have already been some signs of a further breakdown of discipline with troops robbing and harassing civilians.

The general security situation is particularly precarious in Lagos where the northerners appear less securely in control and intertribal tensions are running high. Gowon, although in Lagos for his broadcast yesterday, continues to make his headquarters at the army camp in nearby Ikeja. (see map)

Beyond these considerations lie other problems created by the vendetta which the northern military has evidently launched against civilian as well as military elements of the aggressive Ibo tribe. In addition to probably alienating the oil-rich Ibo-inhabited eastern provinces, this seems bound to have seriously adverse effects on the national civil service in which Ibos, because of their superior education, have long been the most important tribal element.

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* Because of the shortage of time for preparation of this item, the analytic interpretation presented here has been produced by the Central Intelligence Agency without the participation of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State or of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of Defense.

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NOTES

France-NATO: France will cease its payments to most NATO infrastructure and military budget programs as of 1 January 1967. Paris has indicated a desire, however, to continue to participate in selected programs in which it has a particular interest. France's unilateral decision may strengthen the hand of those members of the Fourteen who are reluctant to grant France a special status enabling it to choose its projects.

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US-USSR: Soviet-US disagreement on certain provisions has brought negotiations on an outer space treaty to a standstill despite the progress made in recent weeks. Moscow seeks restrictions on inspection visits to installations in space, opposes a US provision which would permit the stationing of military equipment and personnel in space for peaceful purposes and wants reporting on space events to be voluntary. The Soviets also insist that countries which permit tracking stations for one country be required to grant them to others. Unless concessions are made on these points, further negotiations probably will be delayed until the UN General Assembly convenes in September.

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